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FACT SHEET

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Improving Trial Court Facilities: Fiscal Year 2008–2009 Funding Requests

Tehama—New Red Bluff Courthouse

Butte—New North Butte County Courthouse
Los Angeles—New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse
Yolo—New Woodland Courthouse

In April 2007, the Judicial Council adopted an updated Trial Court Capital-Outlay Plan that includes 175 new-construction, major renovation, and expansion projects estimated to cost \$9.7 billion (January 2007 dollars). The Judicial Council also directed staff of the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) to submit, as part of the fiscal year 2008–2009 budget process, funding requests for four new trial court facilities. The initial funding request for these four urgently needed projects is \$61.6 million in FY 2008–2009, which would be funded by bond funds. Their total project costs are estimated to be \$433.5 million. If approved, these projects mark important progress toward implementing needed projects for trial courts across California. As noted below, the judicial branch will additionally pursue alternative revenue sources over the next several years to support the full implementation of the statewide Trial Court Capital-Outlay Plan.

New Red Bluff Courthouse

A new Red Bluff Courthouse is proposed by the AOC for initial funding of \$16.3 million for FY 2008–2009. The new facility will house five courtrooms. The estimated total cost for this courthouse of approximately 52,300 gross square feet is \$73 million (escalated to construction mid-point in Spring 2011). This project is ranked in the Immediate Need Project Priority Group of the Trial Court Capital-Outlay Plan and is one of the highest priority capital-outlay projects for the judicial branch.

No Security, Severe Overcrowding, Poor Physical Conditions, and Reduced Access to Court Services

The County of Tehama is served by six trial court locations. These court facilities are functionally deficient, overcrowded, and among the worst in the state in terms of security and physical conditions. The existing facilities will remain incapable of meeting the region's growing demand for court services. The overcrowding and security issues at the existing facilities and the public's hindered access to court services are among the reasons why the proposed new Red Bluff Courthouse is urgently needed.



Judge Holds Court in Parking Lot Due to Lack of Space in Existing Courtroom

Local Government Collaboration on Project

The Tehama County Board of Supervisors and the City of Red Bluff support the need to replace the existing Tehama Courthouse with a new facility in Red Bluff. The AOC will work collaboratively with the county and city to select a site for the new facility and develop a project that meets the goals of the local community.

Long-term Funding Needs

The California judicial branch is exploring additional, alternative means to fund the state's sizable need for courthouse infrastructure improvements. Options include pursuing bond funding—consideration will be given to both revenue and general obligation bonds. Another potential consideration involves increasing criminal penalties and other filing fees to be contributed to the State Court Facilities Construction Fund for the sole purpose of funding court construction projects. While these initiatives evolve, the Judicial Council will pursue annual funding requests to begin to address the most critical deficiencies in the state's courthouses.

More Information

A project feasibility report for the New Red Bluff Courthouse, dated December 20, 2007, was prepared by AOC staff to document the poor functional and physical conditions of the existing court facilities in Tehama County, explore options for how best to meet the need for improved facilities, and estimate the cost to construct a new facility. This document can be downloaded from the following Web site:

http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/occm/documents/final_tehama_pfr_07_12_20_dof_update.pdf

For further information, please contact Kelly Popejoy, Senior Manager of Planning in the AOC-Office of Court Construction and Management, at 818-558-3078 or email at kelly.popejoy@jud.ca.gov.